RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 23rd December, 2005/2 Pausa, 1927 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Over-bridges/under-bridges under construction in Assam

*441. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of over-bridges/under-bridges under construction in Assam;

(b) the details of the proposals sent by the Government of Assam for construction of over-bridges/under-bridges at railway crossings; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) Railway takes up works for Road Over/Under Bridges (ROB/RUB) in lieu of existing busy level crossings on cost sharing basis where traffic density is more than 1 lakh Train Vehicle Units (TVUs) (TVU-A unit obtained by multiplying the number of trains with the number of road vehicles passing over the level crossing in 24 hours). These works are considered by Railway based on the proposals sponsored by State Govt./local bodies duly fulfilling certain preliminary requisites. In case of level crossing where traffic density is less than 1 lakh TVUs proposals are considered on deposit basis for which initial cost of construction and recurring maintenance charges are borne by sponsoring authority. Railway construct the railway portion *i.e.* bridge proper across the railway tracks and approaches are completed by State Govt.

At present, one work of construction of ROB in lieu of level crossing No. SK-49 at km 143/10-11 near Bongaigaon between Salmara and Chapaguri Road stations is under construction on cost sharing basis in State of Assam. In addition to above cost sharing work, 5 ROB works are under construction on deposit terms. Out of these in case of four works entire cost is being borne by Border Road Organization and in one case entire cost is borne by State Govt/PWD. The list of ROB/RUB works under construction on cost sharing and deposit terms in Assam State is enclosed as Statement-I. (*See below*)

(b) No further firm proposal for construction of ROB/RUB in lieu of level crossings has been received by railway from Govt. of Assam for inclusion in ensuing Works Programme 2006-07 of Railways.

(c) Does not arise.

Statement-I

Overbridges/underbridges under construction in Assam.

Sl. No.	Name of ROB/RUB under construction	Cost sharing/ deposit	Progress		Remarks
			Rly portion	Approaches	
1	Bongaigaon ROB in replacement of LC No. SK-49	Cost sharing	100%	90%	Work on Railway portion completed. The approach work is executed by State Government.
2	Katakhal ROB between station Katakhan—Salchapra NH 55 Byepass	Deposit	Nil	30%	Modified General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) approved in 9.8.2005. Detailed design for bridge portion is awaited from Border Road Organisation (BRO). Entire work done by BRO.
3	Katakhal ROB between station Katakhan—Salchapra NH 53 Byepass Road	Deposit	Nil	35%	Modified GAD approved in 21.8.2005. Detail Design, Drawings and Estimate for bridge proper awaited from Border Road Organisation (BRO). Entire work done by BRO.
4	Karimganj ROB between station. Karimganj Suprakanti NH-44 Byepass	Deposit	95%	90%	Work in progress in bridge proper as well as on approaches. Entire work done by BRO.

Sl. No.	Name of ROB/RUB under construction	Cost sharing/ deposit	Progress Rly portion	Approaches	Remarks
5	Karimganj ROB between stn. Karimganj Chargola NH-44 byepass	Deposit	95%	90%	Work is in progress in bridge proper as well as on ap proaches. Entire work done by BRO.
6	Agthori ROB between stn. Agthori—Kamakhya Approach Road of IIT/Guwahati	Deposit	60%	100%	Work is in progress in bridge proper as well as on approaches. Entire work is being done by State PWD.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir, the hon. Minister has given a detailed reply to my question. But the purpose of my asking this question is this. There are a lot of level crossings as a result of which rail and road traffic is badly affected, particulary, in the Guwahati city. For example, between Kamakya railway station and Guwahati railway station, which is hardly seven kilometres, there are 10 level crossings, by which both rail and road traffic are affected. My first supplementary to the hon. Minister is this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to take some steps to construct over-bridges on this railway crossings, namely, from Kamakya railway station to Guwahati railway station.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the hon. Member has raised a very valid point. He has expressed his concern for the people of Guwahati to protect them from accidents. The ROB construction itself is a matter of safety; it is a great separation. It is beneficial both for the railway administration...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What are you doing in this matter?

SHRI R. VELU: I will come to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please come to that.

SHRI R. VELU: In Assam, we have got 412 manned gates; out of which, we have selected 19 for the purpose of provision of ROBs because there exist more than 1 lakh train vehicle units, but we have not received any proposal for the year 2006-07. It is the State Government's responsibility. Having understood that there are so many LCs which are eligible for these 19 of them, they should come forward. In the whole of India, we have identified 1,233 LCs for providing ROB. Now I request the hon. Member to

move the State Government to come out with a proposal for providing these ROBs.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir, my second supplementary is this...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What do you say to his reply? Are you going to request the State Government to send proposals?

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: I will take it up with the State Government. Sir, the Railways have certain things to do. It is not the State Governments which can construct ROBs...

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no question of construction, it is only a question of proposals coming from the State Government.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Yes, Sir; I will take it up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then the question is over. Your work has been done.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: My second supplementary is this. There is a rail-cum-road bridge over the River Brahmaputra at Guwahati which is called the Surai Ghat Bridge, and another road bridge is coming up to connect the East-West Corridor near this existing bridge, which is going to be a road bridge, by the National Highways Authority. If this can be made a road-cum-rail bridge, then, the people can avail a lot of benefits from that. My point is that the Railways have delayed in requesting the National Highways Authority to make it a road-cum-rail bridge. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether at this stage this can be made road-cum-rail bridge in Guwahati.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, this is not related to this question. On making road-cum-rail bridges for these two bridges, which he is talking about, I will get back to the hon. Member. But I want to clarify it here. He said the Railways did not take the initiative for ROBs. That is not so. It is the responsibility of the State Governmetn to say that. Sir, I will make five-six points very quickly which will be helpful to him. One thing is that the State Government should agree to close the level crossing as ROB comes to an end. Secondly, they should agree to 50 per cent of the Financial Outlay. Thirdly, they should agree to ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, take your seat.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I want to enlighten the hon. Member, so that he will move the State Government and the proposal do not get held up there.

SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Sir, due to lack of fund, many over-bridge and under-bridge works could not be completed. It has been reported in some papers that even the cess collected by the State Government of Tamil Nadu could not be made use.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tamil Nadu?

SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Sir, this is a general question. It was due to lack of fund allocation by the Railways. Recently, the Standing Committee on Railways had suggested to the Government to meet 75 per cent of the cost of these bridges for their early completion. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government had decided to meet 75 per cent of these expenses.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, first of all, let me clarify the first point. One the Railways side, I did't have any resource crunch, for the fact being that today the balance as on 31.03.2005 is about Rs. 1099 crore plus allocation of this year is another Rs. 711 crores. That means, I will have Rs. 1800 crores in my kitty. The other point is whether it could be increased to 70 per cent. The present mode of participation is 50 per cent from the Railways and 50 per cent from the State Government. Here, the Standing Committee on Railways, which has gone into the question, has made a recommendation. What is the recommendation? The State Government is not coming forward, because they are not interested in allocating money for this in their Annual Budget, they have said, "why did't the Railways take up the work?" They have suggested two things. One thing is that the present level of allocation of Rs. 400 crores be made to Rs. 800-900 crores and waiver of the diesel cess of Rs. 320 crore, that is paid by the Railways to the Government. Second suggestion was whether the present twelve-and-a-half per cent of the diesel subsidy which is accruing to the Railways under the CRF Fund could be raised to 25 per cent. Accordingly, we have moved a note to the Cabinet for consideration. The point for consideration is the hesitation of the State Government due to which these proposals are held up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, everybody is satisfied with your reply.